

Some Poems....

TO MY SON.
By Lord Byron

1.

Those flaxen locks, those eyes of blue
Bright as thy mother's in their hue;
Those rosy lips, whose dimples play
And smile to steal the heart away,
Recall a scene of former joy,
And touch thy father's heart, my Boy!

2.

And thou canst lisp a father's name--
Ah, William, were thine own the same,--
No self-reproach--but, let me cease--
My care for thee shall purchase peace;
Thy mother's shade shall smile in joy,
And pardon all the past, my Boy!

3.

Her lowly grave the turf has prest,
And thou hast known a stranger's breast;
Derision sneers upon thy birth,
And yields thee scarce a name on earth;
Yet shall not these one hope destroy,--
A Father's heart is thine, my Boy!

4.

Why, let the world unfeeling frown,
Must I fond Nature's claims disown?
Ah, no--though moralists reprove,
I hail thee, dearest child of Love,
Fair cherub, pledge of youth and joy--
A Father guards thy birth, my Boy!

5.

Oh, 'twill be sweet in thee to trace,
Ere Age has wrinkled o'er my face,
Ere half my glass of life is run,
At once a brother and a son;
And all my wane of years employ
In justice done to thee, my Boy!

6.

Although so young thy heedless sire,
Youth will not damp parental fire;
And, wert thou still less dear to me,
While Helen's form revives in thee,
The breast, which beat to former joy,
Will ne'er desert its pledge, my Boy!

1807.

FOUR SONNETS

by William Shakespeare

LXXXIV

Who is it that says most, which can say more,
Than this rich praise,--that you alone, are you?
In whose confine immured is the store
Which should example where your equal grew.
Lean penury within that pen doth dwell
That to his subject lends not some small glory;
But he that writes of you, if he can tell
That you are you, so dignifies his story,
Let him but copy what in you is writ,
Not making worse what nature made so clear,
And such a counterpart shall fame his wit,
Making his style admired every where.

You to your beauteous blessings add a curse,
Being fond on praise, which makes your praises
worse.

LXXXV

My tongue-tied Muse in manners holds her still,
While comments of your praise richly compil'd,
Reserve their character with golden quill,
And precious phrase by all the Muses fil'd.
I think good thoughts, whilst others write good
words,
And like unlettered clerk still cry 'Amen'
To every hymn that able spirit affords,
In polish'd form of well-refined pen.
Hearing you praised, I say 'tis so, 'tis true,'
And to the most of praise add something more;
But that is in my thought, whose love to you,
Though words come hindmost, holds his rank
before.
Then others, for the breath of words respect,
Me for my dumb thoughts, speaking in effect.

LXXXVI

Was it the proud full sail of his great verse,
Bound for the prize of all too precious you,
That did my ripe thoughts in my brain inhearse,
Making their tomb the womb wherein they grew?
Was it his spirit, by spirits taught to write,
Above a mortal pitch, that struck me dead?
No, neither he, nor his compeers by night
Giving him aid, my verse astonished.
He, nor that affable familiar ghost
Which nightly gulls him with intelligence,
As victors of my silence cannot boast;
I was not sick of any fear from thence:
But when your countenance fill'd up his line,
Then lacked I matter; that enfeebled mine.

LXXXVII

Farewell! thou art too dear for my possessing,
And like enough thou know'st thy estimate,
The charter of thy worth gives thee releasing;
My bonds in thee are all determinate.
For how do I hold thee but by thy granting?
And for that riches where is my deserving?
The cause of this fair gift in me is wanting,
And so my patent back again is swerving.
Thy self thou gav'st, thy own worth then not
knowing,
Or me to whom thou gav'st it, else mistaking;
So thy great gift, upon misprision growing,
Comes home again, on better judgement making.
Thus have I had thee, as a dream doth flatter,
In sleep a king, but waking no such matter.

THE BIRTH OF PLEASURE.

By Percy Bysshe Shelley

At the creation of the Earth
Pleasure, that divinest birth,
From the soil of Heaven did rise,
Wrapped in sweet wild melodies--
Like an exhalation wreathing

5

To the sound of air low-breathing
Through Aeolian pines, which make
A shade and shelter to the lake
Whence it rises soft and slow;
Her life-breathing [limbs] did flow

10

In the harmony divine
Of an ever-lengthening line
Which enwrapped her perfect form
With a beauty clear and warm.

THE NIGHT JOURNEY

by Rupert Brooke

Hands and lit faces eddy to a line;

The dazed last minutes click; the clamour dies.

Beyond the great-swung arc o' the roof, divine,

Night, smoky-scarv'd, with thousand coloured
eyes

Glares the imperious mystery of the way.

Thirsty for dark, you feel the long-limbed train

Throb, stretch, thrill motion, slide, pull out and
sway,

Strain for the far, pause, draw to strength
again....

As a man, caught by some great hour, will rise,

Slow-limbed, to meet the light or find his love;

And, breathing long, with staring sightless eyes,

Hands out, head back, agape and silent, move

Sure as a flood, smooth as a vast wind blowing;

And, gathering power and purpose as he goes,

Unstumbling, unreluctant, strong, unknowing,

Borne by a will not his, that lifts, that grows,

Sweep out to darkness, triumphing in his goal,
Out of the fire, out of the little room....
--There is an end appointed, O my soul!
Crimson and green the signals burn; the gloom

Is hung with steam's far-blowing livid streamers.
Lost into God, as lights in light, we fly,
Grown one with will, end-drunken huddled
dreamers.

The white lights roar. The sounds of the world
die.

And lips and laughter are forgotten things.
Speed sharpens; grows. Into the night, and on,
The strength and splendour of our purpose
swings.

The lamps fade; and the stars. We are alone.

THE GRINDSTONE

by Robert Frost

Having a wheel and four legs of its own
Has never availed the cumbersome grindstone
 To get it anywhere that I can see.
These hands have helped it go and even race;
 Not all the motion, though, they ever lent,
Not all the miles it may have thought it went,
 Have got it one step from the starting place.
 It stands beside the same old apple tree.
 The shadow of the apple tree is thin
 Upon it now; its feet are fast in snow.
 All other farm machinery's gone in,
 And some of it on no more legs and wheel
Than the grindstone can boast to stand or go.
 (I'm thinking chiefly of the wheelbarrow.)
For months it hasn't known the taste of steel,
 Washed down with rusty water in a tin.
But standing outdoors, hungry, in the cold,
 Except in towns, at night, is not a sin.
 And, anyway, its standing in the yard
 Under a ruinous live apple tree
Has nothing any more to do with me,
 Except that I remember how of old,
 One summer day, all day I drove it hard,
And some one mounted on it rode it hard,

And he and I between us ground a blade.

I gave it the preliminary spin,
And poured on water (tears it might have been);
And when it almost gayly jumped and flowed,
A Father-Time-like man got on and rode,
Armed with a scythe and spectacles that
glowed.

He turned on will-power to increase the load
And slow me down--and I abruptly slowed,
Like coming to a sudden railroad station.
I changed from hand to hand in desperation.

I wondered what machine of ages gone
This represented an improvement on.
For all I knew it may have sharpened spears
And arrowheads itself. Much use for years
Had gradually worn it an oblate
Spheroid that kicked and struggled in its gait,
Appearing to return me hate for hate.
(But I forgive it now as easily
As any other boyhood enemy
Whose pride has failed to get him anywhere.)
I wondered who it was the man thought
ground--

The one who held the wheel back or the one
Who gave his life to keep it going round?

I wondered if he really thought it fair
For him to have the say when we were done.
Such were the bitter thoughts to which I turned.

Not for myself was I so much concerned.
Oh, no!--although, of course, I could have
found

A better way to pass the afternoon
Than grinding discord out of a grindstone,
And beating insects at their gritty tune.
Nor was I for the man so much concerned.
Once when the grindstone almost jumped its
bearing

It looked as if he might be badly thrown
And wounded on his blade. So far from caring,
I laughed inside, and only cranked the faster,
(It ran as if it wasn't greased but glued);
I welcomed any moderate disaster
That might be calculated to postpone
What evidently nothing could conclude.

The thing that made me more and more afraid
Was that we'd ground it sharp and hadn't
known,
And now were only wasting precious blade.
And when he raised it dripping once and tried
The creepy edge of it with wary touch,

And viewed it over his glasses funny-eyed,
Only disinterestedly to decide
It needed a turn more, I could have cried
Wasn't there danger of a turn too much?
Mightn't we make it worse instead of better?
I was for leaving something to the whetter.
What if it wasn't all it should be? I'd
Be satisfied if he'd be satisfied.

TWO SONNETS
by Edna St Vincent Millay

II

What's this of death, from you who never will
die?

Think you the wrist that fashioned you in clay,
The thumb that set the hollow just that way
In your full throat and lidded the long eye
So roundly from the forehead, will let lie
Broken, forgotten, under foot some day
Your unimpeachable body, and so slay
The work he most had been remembered by?

I tell you this: whatever of dust to dust
Goes down, whatever of ashes may return
To its essential self in its own season,
Loveliness such as yours will not be lost,
But, cast in bronze upon his very urn,
Make known him Master, and for what good
reason.

III

I know I am but summer to your heart,
And not the full four seasons of the year;
And you must welcome from another part
Such noble moods as are not mine, my dear.
No gracious weight of golden fruits to sell
Have I, nor any wise and wintry thing;
And I have loved you all too long and well
To carry still the high sweet breast of spring.

Wherefore I say: O love, as summer goes,
I must be gone, steal forth with silent drums,
That you may hail anew the bird and rose
When I come back to you, as summer comes.
Else will you seek, at some not distant time,
Even your summer in another clime.

DIE KÜCHE

by Alfred Kreymborg

She lets the hydrant water run:
He fancies lonely, banal,
bald-headed mountains,
affected by the daily
caress of the tropical sun,
weeping tears the length of brooks
down their faces and flanks.
She lets the hydrant water run:
He hearkens Father Sebastian
cooking and spreading homely themes
over an inept-looking clavier
confounding the wits of his children
and all men's children
down to the last generation.
He marvels at the paradox,
drums his head with the tattoo:
how can a thing as small as he
shape and maintain an art
out of himself universal enough
to carry her daily vigil
to crystallised immortality?
She lets the hydrant water run.

BY THE SEA.

By Emily Dickinson

I started early, took my dog,
And visited the sea;
The mermaids in the basement
Came out to look at me,

And frigates in the upper floor
Extended hempen hands,
Presuming me to be a mouse
Aground, upon the sands.

But no man moved me till the tide
Went past my simple shoe,
And past my apron and my belt,
And past my bodice too,

And made as he would eat me up
As wholly as a dew
Upon a dandelion's sleeve --
And then I started too.

And he -- he followed close behind;
I felt his silver heel
Upon my ankle, -- then my shoes
Would overflow with pearl.

Until we met the solid town,
No man he seemed to know;
And bowing with a mighty look
At me, the sea withdrew.

THE SEA.

By Emily Dickinson

An everywhere of silver,
With ropes of sand
To keep it from effacing
The track called land.

SUNSET IN THE TROPICS

by James Weldon Johnson

A silver flash from the sinking sun,
Then a shot of crimson across the sky
That, bursting, lets a thousand colors fly
And riot among the clouds; they run,
Deepening in purple, flaming in gold,
Changing, and opening fold after fold,
Then fading through all of the tints of the rose
into gray,
Till, taking quick fright at the coming night,
They rush out down the west,
In hurried quest
Of the fleeing day.

Now above where the tardiest color flares a
moment yet,
One point of light, now two, now three are set
To form the starry stairs,--
And, in her fire-fly crown,
Queen Night, on velvet slippered feet, comes
softly down.

AUTUMN

by Christina Rossetti

I dwell alone--I dwell alone, alone,
 Whilst full my river flows down to the sea,
Gilded with flashing boats
 That bring no friend to me:
O love-songs, gurgling from a hundred throats,
 O love-pangs, let me be.

Fair fall the freighted boats which gold and stone
 And spices bear to sea:
Slim, gleaming maidens swell their mellow
notes,

 Love-promising, entreating--

10

 Ah! sweet, but fleeting--
Beneath the shivering, snow-white sails.
Hush! the wind flags and fails--
Hush! they will lie becalmed in sight of strand--
 Sight of my strand, where I do dwell alone;
Their songs wake singing echoes in my land--
 They cannot hear me moan.

One latest, solitary swallow flies
Across the sea, rough autumn-tempest tossed,
Poor bird, shall it be lost?

20

Dropped down into this uncongenial sea,
With no kind eyes
To watch it while it dies,
Ungessed, uncared for, free:
Set free at last,
The short pang past,
In sleep, in death, in dreamless sleep locked fast.

Mine avenue is all a growth of oaks,
Some rent by thunder strokes,
Some rustling leaves and acorns in the breeze;
30

Fair fall my fertile trees,
That rear their goodly heads, and live at ease.

A spider's web blocks all mine avenue;
He catches down and foolish painted flies
That spider wary and wise.
Each morn it hangs a rainbow strung with dew
Betwixt boughs green with sap,
So fair, few creatures guess it is a trap:
I will not mar the web,
Though sad I am to see the small lives ebb.

It shakes--my trees shake--for a wind is roused
In cavern where it housed:
Each white and quivering sail,
Of boats among the water leaves
Hollows and strains in the full-throated gale:
Each maiden sings again--
Each languid maiden, whom the calm
Had lulled to sleep with rest and spice and balm
Miles down my river to the sea
They float and wane,

50

Long miles away from me.

Perhaps they say: 'She grieves,
Uplifted, like a beacon, on her tower.'
Perhaps they say: 'One hour
More, and we dance among the golden sheaves.'
Perhaps they say: 'One hour
More, and we stand,
Face to face, hand in hand;
Make haste, O slack gale, to the looked-for land!'

My trees are not in flower,
60
I have no bower,
And gusty creaks my tower,
And lonesome, very lonesome, is my strand.

THE CHURCH-BELL

by Elinor Wylie

As I was lying in my bed
I heard the church-bell ring;
Before one solemn word was said
A bird began to sing.

I heard a dog begin to bark
And a bold crowing cock;
The bell, between the cold and dark,
Tolled. It was five o'clock.

The church-bell tolled, and the bird sang,
A clear true voice he had;
The cock crew, and the church-bell rang,
I knew it had gone mad.

A hand reached down from the dark skies,
It took the bell-rope thong,
The bell cried "Look! Lift up your eyes!"
The clapper shook to song.

The iron clapper laughed aloud,
Like clashing wind and wave;
The bell cried out "Be strong and proud!"
Then, with a shout, "Be brave!"

The rumbling of the market-carts,
The pounding of men's feet
Were drowned in song; "Lift up your hearts!"
The sound was loud and sweet.

Slow and slow the great bell swung,
It hung in the steeple mute;
And people tore its living tongue
Out by the very root.

A VAGABOND SONG

by Bliss Carman

There is something in the Autumn that is
native to my blood--
Touch of manner, hint of mood;
And my heart is like a rhyme,
With the yellow and the purple and the
crimson keeping time.

The scarlet of the maples can shake me like a
cry
Of bugles going by.
And my lonely spirit thrills
To see the frosty asters like smoke upon the
hills.

There is something in October sets the gipsy
blood astir;
We must rise and follow her,
When from every hill of flame
She calls and calls each vagabond by name.

WINDLASS SONG

by William Allingham

Heave at the windlass!--Heave O, cheerly,
men!

Heave all at once, with a will!
The tide quickly making,
Our cordage a-creaking,
The water has put on a frill,
Heave O!

Fare you well, sweethearts!--Heave O, cheerly,
men!

Fare you well, frolic and sport!
The good ship all ready,
Each dog-vane is steady,
The wind blowing dead out of port,
Heave O!

Once in blue water--Heave O, cheerly, men!
Blow it from north or from south;
She'll stand to it tightly,
And curtsey politely,
And carry a bone in her mouth,
Heave O!

Short cruise or long cruise--Heave O, cheerly,
men!

Jolly Jack Tar thinks it one.
No latitude dreads he
Of White, Black, or Red Sea,
Great icebergs, or tropical sun,
Heave O!

One other turn, and Heave O, cheerly, men!
Heave, and good-bye to the shore!
Our money, how went it?
We shared it and spent it;
Next year we'll come back with some more,
Heave O!

MY HEART'S IN THE HIGHLANDS

by Robert Burns

My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not
here;
My heart's in the Highlands a-chasing the
deer;
Chasing the wild deer, and following the roe,
My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.
Farewell to the Highlands, farewell to the
North,
The birthplace of valor, the country of worth;
Wherever I wander, wherever I rove,
The hills of the Highlands forever I love.

Farewell to the mountains high covered with
snow;
Farewell to the straths and green valleys
below;
Farewell to the forests and wild-hanging
woods;
Farewell to the torrents and loud-pouring
floods.
My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not
here,
My heart's in the Highlands a-chasing the
deer;

Chasing the wild deer, and following the roe,
My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.

FIFE AND DRUM

by John Dryden

The trumpet's loud clangor
Excites us to arms,
With shrill notes of anger
And mortal alarms.

The double, double, double beat
Of the thundering drum,
Cries, "Hark! the foes come;
Charge, charge! 'tis too late to retreat."

KUBLA KHAN

by Samuel Taylor Coleridge

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man,
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And there were gardens bright with sinuous
rills
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing
tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But O! that deep romantic chasm which
slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil
seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were
breathing,

A mighty fountain momentarily was forced:
Amid whose swift, half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momentarily the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale, the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!
A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her sympathy and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me,

That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! Those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

THE SOUL OF WINE.

By Charles Baudelaire

One eve in the bottle sang the soul of wine:

"Man, unto thee, dear disinherited,
I sing a song of love and light divine--
Prisoned in glass beneath my seals of red.

"I know thou labourest on the hill of fire,
In sweat and pain beneath a flaming sun,
To give the life and soul my vines desire,
And I am grateful for thy labours done.

"For I find joys unnumbered when I lave
The throat of man by travail long outworn,
And his hot bosom is a sweeter grave
Of sounder sleep than my cold caves forlorn.

"Hearest thou not the echoing Sabbath sound?
The hope that whispers in my trembling
breast?
Thy elbows on the table! gaze around;
Glorify me with joy and be at rest.

"To thy wife's eyes I'll bring their long-lost
gleam,
I'll bring back to thy child his strength and
light,
To him, life's fragile athlete I will seem
Rare oil that firms his muscles for the fight.

"I flow in man's heart as ambrosia flows;
The grain the eternal Sower casts in the sod--
From our first loves the first fair verse arose,
Flower-like aspiring to the heavens and
God!"

TWO SONNETS

by John Keats

I. TO MY BROTHER GEORGE.

Many the wonders I this day have seen:

 The sun, when first he kist away the tears

 That fill'd the eyes of morn;--the laurel'd peers

Who from the feathery gold of evening lean:--

The ocean with its vastness, its blue green,

 Its ships, its rocks, its caves, its hopes, its
fears,--

 Its voice mysterious, which whoso hears

Must think on what will be, and what has been.

E'en now, dear George, while this for you I write,

 Cynthia is from her silken curtains peeping

So scantily, that it seems her bridal night,

 And she her half-discover'd revels keeping.

But what, without the social thought of thee,

Would be the wonders of the sky and sea?

II. TO * * * * *

Had I a man's fair form, then might my sighs
Be echoed swiftly through that ivory shell,
Thine ear, and find thy gentle heart; so well
Would passion arm me for the enterprize:
But ah! I am no knight whose foeman dies;
No cuirass glistens on my bosom's swell;
I am no happy shepherd of the dell
Whose lips have trembled with a maiden's eyes;
Yet must I dote upon thee,--call thee sweet.
Sweeter by far than Hybla's honied roses
When steep'd in dew rich to intoxication.
Ah! I will taste that dew, for me 'tis meet,
And when the moon her pallid face discloses,
I'll gather some by spells, and incantation.

AFTER LOVE
by Sara Teasdale

There is no magic any more,
We meet as other people do,
You work no miracle for me
Nor I for you.

You were the wind and I the sea --
There is no splendor any more,
I have grown listless as the pool
Beside the shore.

But though the pool is safe from storm
And from the tide has found surcease,
It grows more bitter than the sea,
For all its peace.

SUMMER NIGHT, RIVERSIDE

by Sara Teasdale

In the wild, soft summer darkness
How many and many a night we two together
Sat in the park and watched the Hudson
Wearing her lights like golden spangles
Glinting on black satin.

The rail along the curving pathway
Was low in a happy place to let us cross,
And down the hill a tree that dripped with bloom
Sheltered us,
While your kisses and the flowers,
Falling, falling,
Tangled my hair. . . .

The frail white stars moved slowly over the sky.

And now, far off
In the fragrant darkness
The tree is tremulous again with bloom,
For June comes back.

To-night what girl
Dreamily before her mirror shakes from her hair
This year's blossoms, clinging in its coils?

WHISPERS OF IMMORTALITY

by T. S. Eliot

Webster was much possessed by death
And saw the skull beneath the skin;
And breastless creatures under ground
Leaned backward with a lipless grin.

Daffodil bulbs instead of balls
Stared from the sockets of the eyes!
He knew that thought clings round dead limbs
Tightening its lusts and luxuries.

Donne, I suppose, was such another
Who found no substitute for sense;
To seize and clutch and penetrate,
Expert beyond experience,

He knew the anguish of the marrow
The ache of the skeleton;
No contact possible to flesh
Allayed the fever of the bone.

.
Grishkin is nice: her
Russian eye is underlined for emphasis;
Uncorseted, her friendly bust
Gives promise of pneumatic bliss.

The couched Brazilian jaguar
Compels the scampering marmoset
With subtle effluence of cat;
Grishkin has a maisonette;

The sleek Brazilian jaguar
Does not in its arboreal gloom
Distil so rank a feline smell
As Grishkin in a drawing-room.

And even the Abstract Entities
Circumambulate her charm;
But our lot crawls between dry ribs
To keep our metaphysics warm.

THE PALE OPERATOR

by Morris Rosenfeld

If but with my pen I could draw him,
With terror you'd look in his face;
For he, since the first day I saw him,
Has sat there and sewed in his place.

Years pass in procession unending,
And ever the pale one is seen,
As over his work he sits bending,
And fights with the soulless machine.

I feel, as I gaze at each feature,
Perspiring and grimy and wan,
It is not the strength of the creature,--
The will only, urges him on.

And ever the sweat-drops are flowing,
They fall o'er his thin cheek in streams,
They water the stuff he is sewing,
And soak themselves into the seams.

How long shall the wheel yet, I pray you,
Be chased by the pale artisan?
And what shall the ending be, say you?
Resolve the dark riddle who can!

I know that it cannot be reckoned,--
But one thing the future will show:
When this man has vanished, a second
Will sit in his place there and sew.

ALTITUDE
by Lola Ridge

I wonder
how it would be here with you,
where the wind
that has shaken off its dust in low valleys
touches one cleanly,
as with a new-washed hand,
and pain
is as the remote hunger of droning things,
and anger
but a little silence
sinking into the great silence.

THE SIGN

by Edgar Lee Masters

There's not a soul on the square,
And the snow blows up like a sail,
Or dizzily drifts like a drunken man
Falling, before the gale.

And when the wind eddies it rifts
The snow that lies in drifts;
And it skims along the walk and sifts
In stairways, doorways all about
The steps of the church in an angry rout.
And one would think that a hungry hound
Was out in the cold for the sound.

But I do not seem to mind
The snow that makes one blind,
Nor the crying voice of the wind--
I hate to hear the creak of the sign
Of Harmon Whitney, attorney at law:
With its rhythmic monotone of awe.
And neither a moan nor yet a whine,
Nor a cry of pain--one can't define
The sound of a creaking sign.

Especially if the sky be bleak,
And no one stirs however you seek,
And every time you hear it creak
You wonder why they leave it stay
When a man is buried and hidden away
Many a day!

REVEILLE

by Lola Ridge

Come forth, you workers!
Let the fires go cold--
Let the iron spill out, out of the troughs--
Let the iron run wild
Like a red bramble on the floors--
Leave the mill and the foundry and the mine
And the shrapnel lying on the wharves--
Leave the desk and the shuttle and the loom--
Come,
With your ashen lives,
Your lives like dust in your hands.

I call upon you, workers.
It is not yet light
But I beat upon your doors.
You say you await the Dawn
But I say you are the Dawn.
Come, in your irresistible unspent force
And make new light upon the mountains.

You have turned deaf ears to others--
Me you shall hear.
Out of the mouths of turbines,
Out of the turgid throats of engines,

Over the whistling steam,
You shall hear me shrilly piping.
Your mills I shall enter like the wind,
And blow upon your hearts,
Kindling the slow fire.

They think they have tamed you, workers--
Beaten you to a tool
To scoop up hot honor
Till it be cool--
But out of the passion of the red frontiers
A great flower trembles and burns and glows
And each of its petals is a people.

Come forth, you workers--
Clinging to your stable
And your wisp of warm straw--
Let the fires grow cold,
Let the iron spill out of the troughs,
Let the iron run wild
Like a red bramble on the floors....

As our forefathers stood on the prairies
So let us stand in a ring,
Let us tear up their prisons like grass
And beat them to barricades--
Let us meet the fire of their guns
With a greater fire,
Till the birds shall fly to the mountains
For one safe bough.

THE BEE

By Sidney Lanier

What time I paced, at pleasant morn,
A deep and dewy wood,
I heard a mellow hunting-horn
Make dim report of Dian's lustihood
Far down a heavenly hollow.
Mine ear, though fain, had pain to follow:
`Tara!' it twanged, `tara-tara!' it blew,
Yet wavered oft, and flew
Most ficklewise about, or here, or there,
A music now from earth and now from air.
But on a sudden, lo!
I marked a blossom shiver to and fro
With dainty inward storm; and there within
A down-drawn trump of yellow jessamine
A bee
Thrust up its sad-gold body lustily,
All in a honey madness hotly bound
On blissful burglary.
A cunning sound
In that wing-music held me: down I lay
In amber shades of many a golden spray,
Where looping low with languid arms the Vine
In wreaths of ravishment did overtwine

Her kneeling Live-Oak, thousand-fold to plight
Herself unto her own true stalwart knight.

As some dim blur of distant music nears
The long-desiring sense, and slowly clears
To forms of time and apprehensive tune,
So, as I lay, full soon
Interpretation throve: the bee's fanfare,
Through sequent films of discourse vague as air,
Passed to plain words, while, fanning faint
perfume,
The bee o'erhung a rich, unrifled bloom:
"O Earth, fair lordly Blossom, soft a-shine
Upon the star-pranked universal vine,
Hast nought for me?
To thee

Come I, a poet, hereward haply blown,
From out another worldflower lately flown.
Wilt ask, 'What profit e'er a poet brings?'
He beareth starry stuff about his wings
To pollen thee and sting thee fertile: nay,
If still thou narrow thy contracted way,
-- Worldflower, if thou refuse me --
-- Worldflower, if thou abuse me,
And hoist thy stamen's spear-point high
To wound my wing and mar mine eye --
Nathless I'll drive me to thy deepest sweet,

Yea, richlier shall that pain the pollen beat
From me to thee, for oft these pollens be
Fine dust from wars that poets wage for thee.
But, O beloved Earthbloom soft a-shine
Upon the universal Jessamine,
Prithee, abuse me not,
Prithee, refuse me not,
Yield, yield the heartsome honey love to me
Hid in thy nectary!"
And as I sank into a dimmer dream
The pleading bee's song-burthen sole did seem:
"Hast ne'er a honey-drop of love for me
In thy huge nectary?"

Tampa, Florida, 1877.

PORCELAIN

by Conrad Aiken

You see that porcelain ranged there in the
window--

Platters and soup-plates done with pale pink
rosebuds,

And tiny violets, and wreaths of ivy?

See how the pattern clings to the gleaming
edges!

They're works of art--minutely seen and felt,
Each petal done devoutly. Is it failure
To spend your blood like this?

Study them . . . you will see there, in the
porcelain,

If you stare hard enough, a sort of swimming
Of lights and shadows, ghosts within a
crystal--

My brain unfolding! There you'll see me
sitting

Day after day, close to a certain window,
Looking down, sometimes, to see the
people . . .

Sometimes my wife comes there to speak to
me . . .
Sometimes the grey cat waves his tail around
me . . .
Goldfish swim in a bowl, glisten in sunlight,
Dilate to a gorgeous size, blow delicate
bubbles,
Drowse among dark green weeds. On rainy
days,
You'll see a gas-light shedding light behind
me--
An eye-shade round my forehead. There I sit,
Twirling the tiny brushes in my paint-cups,
Painting the pale pink rosebuds, minute
violets,
Exquisite wreaths of dark green ivy leaves.
On this leaf, goes a dream I dreamed last
night
Of two soft-patterned toads--I thought them
stones,
Until they hopped! And then a great black
spider,--
Tarantula, perhaps, a hideous thing,--
It crossed the room in one tremendous leap.
Here,--as I coil the stems between two
leaves,--
It is as if, dwindling to atomy size,

I cried the secret between two universes . . .
A friend of mine took hasheesh once, and said
Just as he fell asleep he had a dream,--
Though with his eyes wide open,--
And felt, or saw, or knew himself a part
Of marvelous slowly-wreathing intricate
patterns,

Plane upon plane, depth upon coiling depth,
Amazing leaves, folding one on another,
Voluted grasses, twists and curves and
spirals--

All of it darkly moving . . . as for me,
I need no hasheesh for it--it's too easy!
Soon as I shut my eyes I set out walking
In a monstrous jungle of monstrous pale pink
roseleaves,

Violets purple as death, dripping with water,
And ivy-leaves as big as clouds above me.

Here, in a simple pattern of separate violets--
With scalloped edges gilded--here you have
me

Thinking of something else. My wife, you
know,--

There's something lacking--force, or will, or
passion,

I don't know what it is--and so, sometimes,

When I am tired, or haven't slept three nights,
Or it is cloudy, with low threat of rain,
I get uneasy--just like poplar trees
Ruffling their leaves--and I begin to think
Of poor Pauline, so many years ago,
And that delicious night. Where is she now?
I meant to write--but she has moved, by this
time,
And then, besides, she might find out I'm
married.
Well, there is more--I'm getting old and
timid--
The years have gnawed my will. I've lost my
nerve!
I never strike out boldly as I used to--
But sit here, painting violets, and remember
That thrilling night. Photographers, she said,
Asked her to pose for them; her eyes and
forehead,--
Dark brown eyes, and a smooth and pallid
forehead,--
Were thought so beautiful.--And so they were.
Pauline . . . These violets are like words
remembered . . .
Darling! she whispered . . . Darling! . . .
Darling! . . . Darling!
Well, I suppose such days can come but once.

Lord, how happy we were! . . .

Here, if you only knew it, is a story--
Here, in these leaves. I stopped my work to
tell it,

And then, when I had finished, went on
thinking:

A man I saw on a train . . . I was still a
boy . . .

Who killed himself by diving against a wall.
Here is a recollection of my wife,
When she was still my sweetheart, years ago.
It's funny how things change,--just change, by
growing,

Without an effort . . . And here are trivial
things,--

A chill, an errand forgotten, a cut while
shaving;

A friend of mine who tells me he is married . .

.

Or is that last so trivial? Well, no matter!

This is the sort of thing you'll see of me,
If you look hard enough. This, in its way,
Is a kind of fame. My life arranged before
you

In scrolls of leaves, rosebuds, violets, ivy,
Clustered or wreathed on plate and cup and
platter . . .

Sometimes, I say, I'm just like John the
Baptist--
You have my head before you . . . on a platter.

CANTO XXXIII

by Dante Alighieri

"O virgin mother, daughter of thy Son,
Created beings all in lowliness
Surpassing, as in height, above them all,
Term by th' eternal counsel pre-ordain'd,
Ennobler of thy nature, so advanc'd
In thee, that its great Maker did not scorn,
Himself, in his own work enclos'd to dwell!
For in thy womb rekindling shone the love
Reveal'd, whose genial influence makes now
This flower to germin in eternal peace!
Here thou to us, of charity and love,
Art, as the noon-day torch: and art, beneath,
To mortal men, of hope a living spring.
So mighty art thou, lady! and so great,
That he who grace desireth, and comes not
To thee for aidance, fain would have desire
Fly without wings. Nor only him who asks,
Thy bounty succours, but doth freely oft
Forerun the asking. Whatsoe'er may be
Of excellence in creature, pity mild,
Relenting mercy, large munificence,
Are all combin'd in thee. Here kneeleth one,
Who of all spirits hath review'd the state,
From the world's lowest gap unto this height.

Suppliant to thee he kneels, imploring grace
For virtue, yet more high to lift his ken
Toward the bliss supreme. And I, who ne'er
Coveted sight, more fondly, for myself,
Than now for him, my prayers to thee prefer,
(And pray they be not scant) that thou wouldst
drive

Each cloud of his mortality away;
That on the sovran pleasure he may gaze.
This also I entreat of thee, O queen!
Who canst do what thou wilt! that in him thou
Wouldst after all he hath beheld, preserve
Affection sound, and human passions quell.
Lo! Where, with Beatrice, many a saint
Stretch their clasp'd hands, in furtherance of my
suit!"

The eyes, that heav'n with love and awe regards,
Fix'd on the suitor, witness'd, how benign
She looks on pious pray'rs: then fasten'd they
On th' everlasting light, wherein no eye
Of creature, as may well be thought, so far
Can travel inward. I, meanwhile, who drew
Near to the limit, where all wishes end,
The ardour of my wish (for so behooved),
Ended within me. Beck'ning smil'd the sage,
That I should look aloft: but, ere he bade,

Already of myself aloft I look'd;
For visual strength, refining more and more,
Bare me into the ray authentic
Of sovran light. Thenceforward, what I saw,
Was not for words to speak, nor memory's self
To stand against such outrage on her skill.
As one, who from a dream awaken'd, straight,
All he hath seen forgets; yet still retains
Impression of the feeling in his dream;
E'en such am I: for all the vision dies,
As 't were, away; and yet the sense of sweet,
That sprang from it, still trickles in my heart.
Thus in the sun-thaw is the snow unseal'd;
Thus in the winds on flitting leaves was lost
The Sybil's sentence. O eternal beam!
(Whose height what reach of mortal thought may
soar?)

Yield me again some little particle
Of what thou then appearedst, give my tongue
Power, but to leave one sparkle of thy glory,
Unto the race to come, that shall not lose
Thy triumph wholly, if thou waken aught
Of memory in me, and endure to hear
The record sound in this unequal strain.

Such keenness from the living ray I met,
That, if mine eyes had turn'd away, methinks,

I had been lost; but, so embolden'd, on
I pass'd, as I remember, till my view
Hover'd the brink of dread infinitude.

O grace! unenvying of thy boon! that gav'st
Boldness to fix so earnestly my ken
On th' everlasting splendour, that I look'd,
While sight was unconsum'd, and, in that depth,
Saw in one volume clasp'd of love, whatever
The universe unfolds; all properties
Of substance and of accident, beheld,
Compounded, yet one individual light
The whole. And of such bond methinks I saw
The universal form: for that whenever
I do but speak of it, my soul dilates
Beyond her proper self; and, till I speak,
One moment seems a longer lethargy,
Than five-and-twenty ages had appear'd
To that emprise, that first made Neptune wonder
At Argo's shadow darkening on his flood.

With fixed heed, suspense and motionless,
Wond'ring I gaz'd; and admiration still
Was kindled, as I gaz'd. It may not be,
That one, who looks upon that light, can turn
To other object, willingly, his view.
For all the good, that will may covet, there

Is summ'd; and all, elsewhere defective found,
Complete. My tongue shall utter now, no more
E'en what remembrance keeps, than could the
babe's

That yet is moisten'd at his mother's breast.
Not that the semblance of the living light
Was chang'd (that ever as at first remain'd)
But that my vision quickening, in that sole
Appearance, still new miracles descry'd,
And toil'd me with the change. In that abyss
Of radiance, clear and lofty, seem'd methought,
Three orbs of triple hue clipt in one bound:
And, from another, one reflected seem'd,
As rainbow is from rainbow: and the third
Seem'd fire, breath'd equally from both. Oh
speech

How feeble and how faint art thou, to give
Conception birth! Yet this to what I saw
Is less than little. Oh eternal light!
Sole in thyself that dwelst; and of thyself
Sole understood, past, present, or to come!
Thou smiledst; on that circling, which in thee
Seem'd as reflected splendour, while I mus'd;
For I therein, methought, in its own hue
Beheld our image painted: steadfastly
I therefore por'd upon the view. As one
Who vers'd in geometric lore, would fain

Measure the circle; and, though pondering long
And deeply, that beginning, which he needs,
Finds not; e'en such was I, intent to scan
The novel wonder, and trace out the form,
How to the circle fitted, and therein
How plac'd: but the flight was not for my wing;
Had not a flash darted athwart my mind,
And in the spleen unfolded what it sought.

Here vigour fail'd the tow'ring fantasy:
But yet the will roll'd onward, like a wheel
In even motion, by the Love impell'd,
That moves the sun in heav'n and all the stars.

VERSE FROM BOOK VII OF THE AENID

by Virgil

Smear'd as she was with black Gorgonian blood,
The Fury sprang above the Stygian flood;
And on her wicker wings, sublime thro' night,
She to the Latian palace took her flight:
There sought the queen's apartment, stood
before

The peaceful threshold, and besieg'd the door.
Restless Amata lay, her swelling breast
Fir'd with disdain for Turnus dispossess'd,
And the new nuptials of the Trojan guest.
From her black bloody locks the Fury shakes
Her darling plague, the fav'rite of her snakes;
With her full force she threw the poisonous dart,
And fix'd it deep within Amata's heart,
That, thus envenom'd, she might kindle rage,
And sacrifice to strife her house husband's age.
Unseen, unfelt, the fiery serpent skims
Betwixt her linen and her naked limbs;
His baleful breath inspiring, as he glides,
Now like a chain around her neck he rides,
Now like a fillet to her head repairs,
And with his circling volumes folds her hairs.
At first the silent venom slid with ease,
And seiz'd her cooler senses by degrees;

Then, ere th' infected mass was fir'd too far,
In plaintive accents she began the war,
And thus bespoke her husband: "Shall," she
said,

"A wand'ring prince enjoy Lavinia's bed?
If nature plead not in a parent's heart,
Pity my tears, and pity her desert.
I know, my dearest lord, the time will come,
You in vain, reverse your cruel doom;
The faithless pirate soon will set to sea,
And bear the royal virgin far away!
A guest like him, a Trojan guest before,
In shew of friendship sought the Spartan shore,
And ravish'd Helen from her husband bore.
Think on a king's inviolable word;
And think on Turnus, her once plighted lord:
To this false foreigner you give your throne,
And wrong a friend, a kinsman, and a son.
Resume your ancient care; and, if the god
Your sire, and you, resolve on foreign blood,
Know all are foreign, in a larger sense,
Not born your subjects, or deriv'd from hence.
Then, if the line of Turnus you retrace,
He springs from Inachus of Argive race."

TWO SONNETS
by Elizabeth Barrett Browning

XVIII

I never gave a lock of hair away
To a man, Dearest, except this to thee,
Which now upon my fingers thoughtfully
I ring out to the full brown length and say
"Take it." My day of youth went yesterday;
My hair no longer bounds to my foot's glee,
Nor plant I it from rose- or myrtle-tree,
As girls do, any more: it only may
Now shade on two pale cheeks the mark of tears,
Taught drooping from the head that hangs aside
Through sorrow's trick. I thought the funeral-
shears
Would take this first, but Love is justified,--
Take it thou,--finding pure, from all those years,
The kiss my mother left here when she died.

XIX

The soul's Rialto hath its merchandize;
I barter curl for curl upon that mart,
And from my poet's forehead to my heart
Receive this lock which outweighs argosies,--
As purple black, as erst to Pindar's eyes
The dim purpureal tresses gloomed athwart
The nine white Muse-brows. For this
counterpart, . . .

The bay crown's shade, Beloved, I surmise,
Still lingers on thy curl, it is so black!
Thus, with a fillet of smooth-kissing breath,
I tie the shadows safe from gliding back,
And lay the gift where nothing hindereth;
Here on my heart, as on thy brow, to lack
No natural heat till mine grows cold in death.

TO THE RIVER
by Edgar Allan Poe

Fair river! in thy bright, clear flow
Of crystal, wandering water,
Thou art an emblem of the glow
Of beauty--the unhidden heart--
The playful maziiness of art
In old Alberto's daughter;

But when within thy wave she looks--
Which glistens then, and trembles--
Why, then, the prettiest of brooks
Her worshipper resembles;
For in his heart, as in thy stream,
Her image deeply lies--
His heart which trembles at the beam
Of her soul-searching eyes.

1829.

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